

Prescription Drug Abuse and Crime in King County, WA

Available Data

Only one source of data was found that tracks crime relating to prescription drugs in King County. Although this does not specifically state the types of crime associated with the law enforcement action it does show a measure of criminal activity associated with prescription drugs.

University of Washington, Alcohol and Drug Abuse Institute – The ADAI regularly provides local data for King County on drug abuse trends including prescription drug abuse.

In 2009-2011 in King County, law enforcement evidence seized and analyzed by the National Forensic Laboratory shows 6,824 forensic cases involving illicit and prescription drugs. Of those, a total of 926 forensic cases – 14% involved prescription drugs.¹

Examples of Local Sources Contacted

Data on prescription drug abuse, diversion and crime in King County, WA is very limited and not specifically tracked by authorities at this time. The following are examples of resources contacted and resulting information.

DEA – Seattle Field Division – The DEA handles federal cases and does not track local level drug diversion or abuse issues.

High Intensity Drug Trafficking Program - Available data includes federal efforts, such as addressing organized drug theft rings from pharmacies, but no available data on prescription drug crimes at local level.

King County Administrative Office of the Courts – Data is entered with varying RCW codes for similar crimes making data extraction and accuracy non-useable for the purposes of tracking prescription drug crimes and diversion.

King County Prosecutors Office - Data collected by the prosecutor's office is not coded specifically for prescription drugs or crimes committed relating to prescription drug use or diversion.

Washington State Patrol – No data available.

Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs – WASPC maintains the FBI uniform Crime Reporting database. Drug related crimes are not coded specifically for prescription drugs.

¹ Banta-Green, Caleb, et al. 2011. Drug Abuse Trends in the Seattle/King County Area. Alcohol and Drug Abuse Institute, University of Washington. Data cited provided by National Forensic Laboratory Information System, U.S. Department of Justice, Drug Enforcement Administration, Office of Diversion Control.